GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1361
ANSWERED ON:23.07.2002
INDO SWISS JOINT RESEARCH ON GOLDEN RICE PROJECT
A. VENKATESH NAIK

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that about 15 million people in the country are suffering from Vitamin A deficiency;

(b) if so, whether the Government have undertaken any joint research on Golden Rice with the Swiss Government;

(c) whether the research work on deficiency of Vitamin `A` has been completed;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) if not, the time by which the research work is likely to be completed?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT)

(a),(b), (c), (d) & (e): According to the Technical Report of National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau(NNMB) for the year 2001-02, 0.8% of pre-school children suffer from vitamin-A deficiency. The Department of Biotechnology jointly with Indian Council of Agriculture Research is implementing a joint research project on Golden Rice under the second phase of Indo-Swiss Collaboration in Biotechnology. Institutions such as Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi; University of Delhi, South Campus, New Delhi Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore; and Directorate of Rice Research, Hyderabad are associated with the research activity within the framework of National Biosafety Guidelines. The work has just started . The basic research work relates to the transformation and breeding of Indian rice varieties used by our population. The results accordingly leading to the development of pro-vitamin-A rich Indian rice varieties to be used by resource-poor farmers and others are expected within 5-6 years.